

It's not only your
moral and ethical
obligation, it's
your legal
obligation.

What To Do If You Suspect Abuse/Neglect

Call Adult Protective Services:

Knoxville: 865-594-5685

Chattanooga: 423-634-6624

Nashville: 615-532-3492

Memphis: 901-543-7800

If you are outside those areas, call toll-free:

1-888-APS-TENN

1-888-277-8366

TTY: 1-800-270-1349

615-532-8569

Phones are answered between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. After hours, a message may be left and your call will be returned the next business day.

Some identified abusers have been placed on a state abuse registry. Call **1-888-310-4650**.

Older adults and those adults with disabilities want to live independently. They need to be safe and as independent as possible. Many cannot depend upon or trust those nearest to them. Those they love the most may abuse them.



Someday you may have the chance to help ensure their safety. Be prepared to take that step. Help them.

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Stopping abuse of
the elderly and
persons who have
disabilities may
start with you.



An elderly person is physically, emotionally, or even sexually abused by a family member. Or a patient at a long-term care facility is victimized by a staff member.



You've read the stories in the newspaper. You've seen them on TV.

As you shook your head and turned the page you asked yourself, "How could this happen? Couldn't someone help before now?"

The truth is, someone could – and should – have helped long before it became a tragedy. And in the future, that someone could be you.

Currently, only 1 in 23 cases is reported. Many times it's because the victim lives with someone



who controls their access to the outside world, plus their finances, meals, medication, and everything else. No one sees their bruises or the frightened looks in their eyes. The abuse goes on.

There are signs that indicate abuse, neglect or, exploitation. Take the time to learn them. If you see them or suspect abuse or neglect contact Adult Protective Services at **1-888-APS-TENN** or **(1-888-277-8366)**.

It's not only your moral and ethical obligation, it's your legal obligation.

Don't look the other way or convince yourself someone else will take care of it. Don't end up having to tell yourself you didn't do enough for someone you know or love.

The frail elderly and people with disabilities rely on us and others to care for them and to help them live out their lives safely with dignity and respect. You can help protect them.

Know The Signs Of Abuse, Neglect Or Exploitation

Physical

- Frequent unexplained injuries
- Burns or bruises that suggest cigarettes or instruments
- Bruises on inner arm, thigh, or other soft parts of the body
- Passive, withdrawn, or emotionless behavior
- Not reacting to pain

Sexual

- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Injury in the genital area (irritation, scarring or urinary tract infections)
- Difficulty sitting or walking
- Fear of being alone with caregivers
- Extremely upset when bathed, changed or examined
- Complaints of sexual contact

Neglect or Self-Neglect

- Malnutrition
- Dehydration
- Lack of personal hygiene
- Habitually dressed in torn or dirty clothes
- Chronic fatigue or listlessness
- Obvious unmet need for medical or dental care
- Hoarding
- Unsafe Living Conditions

Financial Exploitation

- Inability to account for funds
- Utilities turned off for non-payment, bills unpaid
- Asking for money
- Essential purchases like food or medicine aren't made
- Discrepancies in personal bookkeeping
- Caregiver is financially dependent on the adult and shows resentment
- Living at a level significantly less than their resources should provide

Abusers

The abuser could be a family member, a trusted neighbor, or a seemingly friendly orderly at a care facility. The abuser could be young, old, black, white, male, female, well-to-do or scraping to get by. There is no definite description that fits all abusers.

Victims

In approximately 36 percent of the cases in



Tennessee, the victim lives alone and in 46 percent of the cases, the victim lives with relatives. Others may live in facilities or may be homeless.

It doesn't matter. The result is the same. Someone is preying on the victims' vulnerability.

PROTECTION. DIGNITY & RESPECT

